



General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 September 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session

Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the seventieth session

Observer status for the Union for the Mediterranean in the General Assembly

Letter dated 18 September 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the seventieth session of the Assembly, of an additional item, entitled "Observer status for the Union for the Mediterranean in the General Assembly".

In conformity with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II) are attached to the present letter.

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Dina Kavar
Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations



Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

1. Background

1.1 Building on the Barcelona Declaration of 28 November 1995, the Union for the Mediterranean was created by a decision of the Heads of State and Government of 43 Euro-Mediterranean countries in Paris on 13 July 2008. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs, at their meeting held in Marseille, France, on 4 November 2008, decided that the headquarters of the secretariat would be located in Barcelona, Spain.

1.2 The Paris Summit for the Mediterranean agreed to establish new institutional structures to contribute to achieving the political goals of the Barcelona Process initiative, inter alia, through the setting up of a secretariat with a key role within the institutional architecture of the Union for the Mediterranean — the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean. The statute of the secretariat was adopted in Marseille on 3 March 2010 by the senior officials of the States members of the Union for the Mediterranean.

1.3 A headquarters agreement was signed between the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Government of Spain on 4 May 2010, granting the secretariat the privileges and immunities of an international organization under Spanish law.

1.4 The Union for the Mediterranean is an intergovernmental organization that aims to increase the potential for regional integration and cohesion among Euro-Mediterranean countries. It constitutes a framework for political, economic and social relations between the European Union and the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, and is inspired by the goals set out in the Barcelona Declaration, namely, to work towards the creation of an area of peace, stability, security and shared economic prosperity, as well as full respect of democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms, international law and the promotion of understanding between cultures and civilizations in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

2. Membership

2.1 The Union for the Mediterranean is co-presided by two chairs. One chair of the co-presidency shall represent the European Union and the other shall represent all non-European members.

2.2 As of 30 April 2015, the Union for the Mediterranean comprises the 28 States members of the European Union, the European Commission and 15 Mediterranean countries.

2.3 Albania, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Israel, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic (currently suspended), Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Palestine. Libya is currently attending meetings of the Union as an observer.

2.4 The Ministers for Foreign Affairs, in their meeting in Marseille on 3 and 4 November 2008, also decided that the League of Arab States shall participate in all meetings at all levels of the Union for the Mediterranean.

3. Institutional structure

3.1 The secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean acts under the direction of a Secretary-General, assisted by six Deputy Secretaries-General.

3.2 Composition:

3.2.1 Secretary-General

- The Secretary-General is selected among candidates from the member countries of the Union and is appointed or dismissed by consensus by senior officials
- The Secretary-General is the legal representative of the secretariat
- The term of office of the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretaries-General is three years, which may be renewed once for a maximum of three years

3.2.2 Deputy Secretaries-General

- The tasks and responsibilities of the Deputy Secretaries-General are proposed by the Secretary-General and approved by the senior officials in accordance with the project priorities defined in the Summit declarations
- One Deputy Secretary-General from a State member of the European Union is designated by the Secretary-General to serve as the Senior Deputy Secretary-General
- Deputy Secretaries-General will be selected, three by and from States members of the European Union and three by and from non-European member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean, in consultation with one another, and appointed en bloc by consensus by the senior officials
- Deputy Secretaries-General are selected according to geographical balance, experience and technical expertise in their respective areas of work

3.3 Mandate and tasks

3.3.1 In accordance with the statute of the Union for the Mediterranean and stated in the final declaration of the Paris Summit, the identified areas of priority of the Union comprise six main themes:

- De-pollution of the Mediterranean
- Maritime and land highways
- Civil protection
- Alternative energies: Mediterranean solar plan
- Higher education and research, Euro-Mediterranean University
- The Mediterranean Business Initiative

3.3.2 The mandate of the secretariat is of a technical nature, while the political mandate related to all aspects of the initiative remains the responsibility of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and senior officials.

3.3.3 The summit, the conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the appropriate sectoral ministerial meeting or the senior officials will instruct the secretariat to propose the necessary follow-up in terms of initiating the promotion of the projects and the search for partners for their implementation.

3.4 Financing

3.4.1 The running costs of the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean are funded from grants provided by the participants in the Union on a voluntary and balanced basis, as well as from the budget of the European Union. Any funding by the European Union will come from existing resources within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument and other relevant instruments within the multiannual financial framework ceilings and will follow the rules and procedures laid down in the financial regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union and the regulation of the Partnership Instrument.

4. Relations of the Union for the Mediterranean in the international arena

4.1 Intergovernmental and governmental organizations

The secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean provides a unique link between Europe, Africa and the Middle East for new ideas and initiatives in the Mediterranean region. Solid partnerships with institutional and political partners from north and south of the Mediterranean and from other regions have been implemented for the success of the actions and projects supported by the secretariat.

Among others, the secretariat of the Union, under the auspices of the Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition, signed, on 20 September 2011 in the margins of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, a statement for enhanced cooperation by international organizations, jointly with the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

4.2 Relations with international non-governmental organizations

The secretariat of the Union acts as a catalyst of projects, assisting the project promoters throughout the entire project cycle, from project structuring and development, including financial planning and fundraising, as well as project launch, implementation and monitoring.

5. Advantages of granting observer status to the Union for the Mediterranean

5.1 Various activities, goals and methods of the Union for the Mediterranean are conducted with full adherence to the values and merits of the international community and are thus in accordance with international law and governing values.

5.2 The Union has developed its regional agenda in full harmony with the global agenda promoted and spearheaded by the United Nations, sharing commonality in many of the objects and purposes of the United Nations, in particular the Millennium Development Goals and the foreseen new sustainable development agenda.

5.3 The Union is actively engaged in the promotion, implementation and advancement of its work programme in the fields of sustainable development, regional cooperation, job creation and promotion of prosperity, addressing of environment and climate change issues, culture and policy dialogue, and advocacy of the values of democracy, peace and stability.

5.4 The secretariat of the Union, since its establishment in 2010, has had a successful relationship of cooperation with the organizations of the United Nations system. Within this period of time, the continuously increasing number of meetings and activities has confirmed the mutual interest in this cooperation on issues of common concern.

5.5 On the one hand, the requested observer status will be pivotal to best enable the Union to achieve its goals, its quest to enhance its ability to contribute to the well-being of the nations of the Mediterranean and to uphold its commitments to global efforts and the global agenda. On the other hand, the secretariat of the Union would be able to provide operational support to the work of the United Nations departments, programmes and agencies.

In its decision 49/426 of 9 December 1994, adopted without a vote, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee, and taking note of the oral report presented to the Sixth Committee on 25 November 1994 by the Chairman of the Working Group on the question of criteria for the granting of observer status in the Assembly, decided that the granting of observer status in the Assembly should in future be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly. Accordingly, The Union for the Mediterranean, as an intergovernmental organization, fulfils the legal criteria for observer status in the General Assembly.

Recalling with satisfaction that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the statement for enhanced cooperation by international organizations of 20 September 2011, supported the role of the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean as key actor in the region; recalled the unique character of the secretariat as intergovernmental organization of the Mediterranean region; and recalled General Assembly resolution 64/124, by which the Assembly granted observer status for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

Building on this explanatory memorandum:

(a) The General Assembly of the United Nations is requested to grant the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean a standing invitation to participate, as appropriate, in the sessions and work of the Assembly and its subsidiary organs and in international conferences convened under the auspices of the United Nations;

(b) In addition, the General Assembly may wish to consider a decision concerning permission for the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean to circulate its documents in the Assembly;

(c) The General Assembly may also wish to consider inviting the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to adopt similar modalities for cooperation with the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Union for the Mediterranean in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Union for the Mediterranean,

1. *Decides* to invite the Union for the Mediterranean to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;
 2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary actions to implement the present resolution.
-